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COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS CATO SELLS MAKES HIS FIRST VISIT TO YUMA.

Hon. Cato Sells, commissioner of Indian affairs, reached Yuma Monday morning just before daylight after a strenuous trip by auto from the Parker Reservation by way of Blythe and the California side of the Colorado. He was accompanied by Supervisor of Indian Affairs F. A. Thacker; W. M. Reed, chief engineer of the Indian service; R. A. Reeves, general counsel; A. F. Duclos, superintendent of Parker reservation; and C. A. Engle, supervising engineer, all of whom spent Monday and Tuesday sight-seeing all over Yuma Project, devoting most of their time to matters pertaining to the advancement of the Yuma reservation and its nine or ten hundred Yuma Indians.

They were a tired lot of travelers when they reached the Yuma reservation early Monday morning, but that did not deter Commissioner Sells from starting out just after breakfast for a complete tour of the reservation. It was my great honor to be a member of the party from early morning until sunset. Superintendent L. L. Odle was the guide. We made a bee-line for Laguna dam, for not one of the five distinguished visitors had ever seen that wonderful structure. We ate our lunch while the visitors were watching the operation of the ponderous steel gates that open the sluice ways, and they all marveled at the simplicity and precision with which the gates are opened. Having gone to Laguna dam by way of the roadway on the top of the main siphon canal we returned down through the central part of San Pasqual valley, stopping at the Government Experiment Farm, where Superintendent Blair showed the visitors all over the place, pointing out the various crops now undergoing experiment culture, chief among which were a dozen or more different varieties of cotton, all of which will produce upwards of a bale of the fleecy staple per acre.

When we struck the Indian lands, Mr. Odle drove from one Indian place to another all over the reservation, and at every place Mr. Sells would get out of the auto, shake hands with every member of the Indian family, pat the owner on the back and congratulate him on his fine crop of cotton, alfalfa or maize and otherwise show his great interest in the progress the Yumas are making. Every one of the Indians seemed to know his name and expressed more outward friendship for him than I have ever seen them exhibit towards the white race. They seemed to realize that he was doing all in his power for their general betterment and in not a single instance were any of them backward in showing their appreciation. All of them were told that Commissioner Sells would make them a speech at the reservation hall that night, and as a result the hall was filled.

Among other things that the commissioner is very anxious to see the Yumas do is to engage in the hog business, for he realizes that with an abundance of alfalfa and maize, such as he saw growing on each Indian farm visited, that the hog business is bound to prove a very profitable undertaking for his wards. He also wants them to raise mules as well as horses and a milch cow at least for each family. Indeed, Mr. Sells' ambition is to see the Indians prosperous by their own efforts.

Tuesday morning Capt. O. F. Townsend accompanied the visitors down the valley and across the river to Algodones so the commissioner could see for himself what effect the sale of liquor has on the Cocopahs. It is unnecessary to say that he would like to see the saloons abolished, but inasmuch as they are in Mexico it will be a rather hard thing to accomplish.

At noon, "the Merchant Prince," Mr. E. F. Sanguinetti, gave an informal though sumptuous dinner to the entire party, with Mayor George Michelsen, Senator Garvin, Captain Townsend and myself put in for good measure. We sat at the table for upwards of two hours, and then made a hasty trip to Somerton, stopping at the Indian homestead a couple of miles this side of Somerton, where for an hour or more Mr. Sells held a pow-wow with the Yumas who own that magnificent body of land. About thirty Yuma Indians attended the meeting, all of whom promised to at once send their children to school.

Then we went down to Somerton, the entire party constantly remarking that the fields of cotton, alfalfa, and maize were just about the best they had ever seen anywhere. When it is remembered that there are upwards of 100 reservations in the 24 states that have reservations, it means a great deal for Yuma Project.

It was after sundown when Commissioner Sells held his last pow-wow. This was with the big chief of the Cocopahs, whose children Mr. Sells is very anxious to see educated, even though they belong on the Mexican side of the

line. He left that entire matter in the hands of Superintendent Odle.

It was getting dark when we got back to a point where you turn off to go to the famous Sanguinetti Santa Ana ranch, but dark or no dark, Mr. Sells wanted to see it and see it we did. The hundreds of head of fine hogs were rooted out of bed, the famous jack was led out for inspection and all the other fine stock kept on this model farm were examined as best they could be at that hour, greatly to the delight of Mr. Sells and his fellow visitors. We had intended visiting "our beloved Yuma mesa," but Mr. Sells put that pleasure off until his return trip ten days hence on his way back from San Diego.

I violate no confidence when I say that Commissioner Sells was more than delighted with his trip to Yuma. Nor am I exaggerating it in the least when I say that he looked upon the greatest irrigation project in the United States when he was being whisked from point to point over Yuma Project. He was loud in his praise of and admiration for Mr. Odle at what he has accomplished during his superintendency of the Yuma Indian reservation. Mr. Sells is real human. He is the only commissioner the Indians have ever had who really cared anything about their happiness and prosperity. His visit will mean much to Yuma.

YUMA MESA MASS MEETING

All citizens who own land on "our beloved Yuma mesa" are urgently requested to attend a mass meeting in Judge Baxter's court room, Thursday night (tonight) at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of hearing District Counsel Burr, of the U. S. R. S., tell us all about what must be done to get the private lands in the first unit of the Yuma mesa. This invitation is extended to all other citizens who are interested in seeing water placed on the mesa at the earliest possible moment. Mr. Burr comes direct from Washington and will no doubt have much valuable information to give relating to the irrigation of the finest body of citrus fruit land on the face of the earth. Therefore let everybody be at this meeting, and let's all attend it with the determination to do everything in our power to help along the good cause.

Remember, folks, "tonight's the night." Don't miss it.

THE LOS ANGELES HE HIGHBINDER STILL HIGH-BINDING.

The big He Highbinder of Los Angeles is still up to his old tricks, or rather he has learned some new ones, for he is making his water, gas and electric meters work overtime all over the city. Since my return to Yuma last week not less than twenty reputable citizens have informed me that their public utility bills are bigger than ever before, without any reason whatever, except that the big He highbinder "needs the money."

I am told by one of the city officials who happened to meet the big He Highbinder on the street in Los Angeles that he was not well pleased with Engineer Trask's valuation, and that he had sent an expert to Yuma to have a physical valuation placed on his old rat traps. He said the expert had placed this new valuation at the insignificant sum of FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS, as against a valuation of about \$179,000 by Mr. Expert Trask.

If Mr. Moore, otherwise known as the big He Highbinder, thinks he can gull the people of Yuma into paying him \$400,000 for his old rat traps he will find himself very badly mistaken, for Yuma citizens have not yet reached that stage where they are ready to be sent to an insane asylum. If he will put a fair price on his old broken down plants the voters of Yuma may consider the question of purchasing the entire outfit, but this price must not be \$400,000 nor even \$179,000, for the people simply won't stand to be gouged in any such fashion. Nor are they going to submit very much longer to his outrageous monthly bills. Every business house in Yuma can better afford to install its own electric plant rather than be gouged to death month in and month out. Two private electric plants are now in operation and the third is being installed. Others will follow, un-

YUMA MESA NOW IN LIME-LIGHT. DETAILED REPORT SENT TO SECRETARY OF INTERIOR FRANKLIN K. LANE, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SPECIAL COMMISSION.

As predicted exclusively in these columns last Thursday there is "something doing" on the Yuma mesa, for promptly on the date mentioned Consulting Engineer Henny and Chief Electrical Engineer Gaylord reached Yuma and at once begun a careful study of the plans and estimates made by Engineer Marzell and Project Manager Schlecht.

The two distinguished officials named reached Yuma Thursday night and when I called at Reclamation Headquarters Friday morning at 8 o'clock they were in close consultation with Project Manager Schlecht and Engineer Marzell, the latter having been engaged in preparing all necessary data for irrigating the mesa lands ever since he reached here early this spring. He was explaining his report in detail when I entered, but, bless your soul, he shut up like a clam as soon as I entered the project manager's room.

"I would like to give you my pre-conceived ideas about the Yuma mesa proposition," said Mr. Henny with a laugh, "but you must remember that we engineers cannot be as free with out information as you newspaper men are. I can say, however, that we are sent here by the reclamation commission under orders from Secretary Lane to study the plans worked out by the local reclamation officials and then submit our written recommendations. This we expect to be able to do within the next four or five days. All I can say in addition is that you have a wonderful project, every bit as you would have your readers believe."

By the time this issue of the SENTINEL is printed these two members of the special commission will have gone, but the third member, District Counsel Burr, will be here and will take up the matter of forming an "irrigation district" with those who own lands on the mesa. Mr. Burr is the recognized expert of the U. S. R. S., along this line. He was in Phoenix last winter when the Winsor irrigation district bill was under consideration and was highly enthused when it was finally enacted into law. He therefore, probably more than any man connected with the government, knows what steps should be taken in order to get the best benefits from that law. It should not, and probably will not, take more than a very few days to get the whole thing shaped up so it will be satisfactory to everybody.

Mr. Gaylord was here during Mr. Lawson's management of the project with an idea of figuring out the expense of a power plant at the so-called "ten-mile drop." He has made a careful estimate of this particular item, and when once installed will give the old He Highbinder of Los Angeles the blackest eye he ever got, for in all human probability enough electric energy can be developed by such a plant to not only furnish water for the mesa pumping plant but enough in addition to furnish every farmer on the project with all the electric power he may need for his domestic purposes, just as is being done on the Salt River project, where the electric plant will pay for the entire project in less than ten years, with cash profits of over a quarter of a million dollars every year thereafter.

That will certainly be a glorious thing for Yuma Project. In the meantime the mesa lands will not necessarily have to wait for the construction of the power plant at the "ten-mile drop," for while that is being constructed sufficient power can be obtained from the Sierra High Power line at probably less than two cents per kwh., and thus again give the old He Highbinder another black eye, who wants to hold the government up for almost double that amount, while he persists in charging local consumers SIXTEEN cents per kwh.

All in all, therefore, it looks mighty good for "our beloved Yuma Mesa. On with the good work, you gentlemen who have the matter in charge. Your names shall be blessed when the work is done.

til the old He highbinder will have but a handful of patrons. In the meantime let us hurry up that test case on the new rate ordinance. The people are entitled to relief from robbery.

The dreaded German U-boat has not made the headway that was expected during the last two or three weeks. Uncle Sam has taken a hand in the matter of destroying them, which accounts for it.

President Kerensky of Russia, sounds funny, but it may be that he will yet prove the man of the hour and lead the Russian lion to a glorious victory over the kaiser and his fellow murderers.